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August 21, 1997

Mr. Dick Akin, Chairman Board of Supervisors County of Sutter 1160 Civic Center Boulevard Yuba City, California 95993

Dear Mr. Akin:

Mr. Mike Madigan, Chair of the Bay-Delta Advisory Council, has referred your recent letter concerning groundwater management in Sutter County and its relationship to the CALFED Bay-Delta Program to me to respond. I apologize for the delay in answering your letter.

As I am sure you are aware, CALFED is analyzing, as part of its programmatic EIR/EIS, several potential storage options, including both new surface water facilities and conjunctive use/groundwater banking. At the programmatic level, we will not emphasize any particular storage option, either surface or groundwater over another; rather, each storage component will be evaluated on its individual merit and on its merit in the context of the state water resources development system. We have several work groups addressing the issues which you raise in the attachment to your letter, and I encourage you to attend and participate, if you are not already doing so.

The new BDAC Water Transfers Work Group, which held its first meeting on August 7, will address the various issues that surround water transfers and provide advice to BDAC and the CALFED agencies. A critical component of this work group's effort will be identifying and addressing the potential impacts of water transfers. This work group will meet again in mid-September. The BDAC Assurances Work Group, which next meets on September 9, would also be an appropriate forum for your participation since it is exploring the assurance needs of the various stakeholder groups. Our approach to transfers is consistent with the Governor's 1997 water policy, which called for integration of local government into the decision making process for water transfers.

Our general approach to groundwater management as a CALFED Program element is significantly different from the Supplemental Water Purchase Program that you referred to in

California

The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

CALFED Agencies

Environmental Protection Agency Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Bureau of Reclamation U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

Federal

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your letter. We intend to use the work groups discussed above to assist us in developing the issues (both local and statewide) which need to be addressed and to craft principles which will guide the Program in addressing the identified issues. The work group will also advise the Program Team as we develop a partnership approach with counties, local water districts, and other local interests, to developing pilot projects that will test whether local concerns can be addressed and whether a common interest in groundwater management can be pursued in a joint effort to produce a "win/win" situation for all parties. The participation of Sacramento Valley County representatives in this discussion is key to their success and I, again, encourage your participation in our work groups.

Should you need additional information on dates and times of these meetings, or if you have additional questions on our Program, please feel free to call me or, Steve Yaeger, Deputy Director, at (916) 657-2666.

Sincerely,

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

cc: Mike Madigan